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Chairman: Mr. KITTIKHOUN (Lao People's Democratic Republic)

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AGENDA ITEM 86: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS

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AGENDA ITEM 86: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (A/51/198-S/1996/270, A/51/130, A/C.4/51/L.9 and L.10)

1. Mr. ANNAN (Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations) said that in recent years conflicts had posed many questions and required everyone to think differently about the ways in which problems of peace and security were addressed. Accomplishments and setbacks had provided important lessons in the international community's current efforts to resolve conflicts in many parts of the world.

2. The first such lesson was that States Members of the United Nations needed to be able to deploy their troops more quickly to a peacekeeping operation and to establish a credible presence before a conflict got completely out of hand. That was a particularly urgent matter in the light of the tragic events in Rwanda, Burundi and Eastern Zaire. Progress was being made in that direction. With the support of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, a Mission Planning Service had been established in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. In addition, with the support of the Government of Italy, a logistics base had been established at Brindisi, where start-up kits for the non-military components of operations had been assembled. The Secretariat was also working with Member States to establish the nucleus of a rapidly deployable mission headquarters. It was also encouraging that a number of Member States, within the context of the United Nations standby arrangements, were developing units which could be deployed immediately following a decision of the Security Council.

3. A second lesson was that the effectiveness of a peacekeeping operation was enhanced when personnel were prepared according to certain common standards. While the training of troops for peacekeeping remained the responsibility of Member States, the Secretariat supported national efforts in a variety of ways. The Department's Training Unit had produced training manuals, guidelines, handbooks and videos, which had been distributed to Member States to assist them in preparing their troops, military observers and civilian police observers to participate in peacekeeping missions. In addition, the United Nations was conducting regional peacekeeping workshops in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. It had also established training assistance teams, which now consisted of experienced peacekeepers from every region of the world. At the request of Governments the teams assisted in the peacekeeping training of national troops and in the development of training programmes for national and regional institutions. Once an operation was deployed, a training programme was conducted for the mission headquarters staff.

4. A third lesson was that, when the parties were genuinely interested in a settlement and expressed their commitment by cooperating with the international community - and ultimately with each other - mountains could be moved in the interest of peace. However, in chaotic conditions in which power had devolved to splinter factions which had no real interest in peace there were limits to

what the international community could accomplish, as demonstrated in the case of Somalia.

5. A fourth lesson was that the international community could sometimes nurture the development of cooperation among the parties and their will for peace when it was able to assist with short-term stability and provide positive inducements for longer-term reconciliation. Inducements could include any variety of activities, including development assistance, local infrastructure and water-supply projects, and the provision of access to loans, as well as medical care and veterinary services. In that connection it was useful to compare the situations in Mozambique and Rwanda. In Mozambique financial assistance had been crucial in enabling the Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO) to convert itself from a guerilla army into a legitimate political party. In Rwanda the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) had not had the resources to offer similar assistance and consequently had enjoyed little credibility in the eyes of the people or leverage with their leaders.

6. A fifth lesson was that, even though the parties had consented to an operation, the peacekeeping contingents must be deployed with sufficient means to give credibility to their right of self-defence. In order to carry out its mandate and protect itself against attack, a contingent must have the necessary strength and unity of command. In some situations an impressive show of force was the best way of avoiding having to use force. That tactic had been used successfully by the United Nations in the coalition operations in Eastern Slavonia and Bosnia.

7. The final lesson was the need for an in-depth understanding of the conflict based on ample inputs from Member States and solid political analysis. Only on that basis could a clear mandate be formulated, the operational means assembled to achieve it, and public information programmes implemented to explain to the peoples of the world the mission of the United Nations and the limitations of peacekeeping. The key to successful peacekeeping was the parties to the conflict themselves.

8. Mr. ZAKI (Rapporteur), speaking on behalf of the Special Committee for Peacekeeping Operations, introduced the Committee's report to the General Assembly, which reflected recent changes and developments in the peacekeeping landscape. The Special Committee's general debate and its working group discussions had covered a broad range of such issues as the mechanisms for consultation between troop contributors and the Security Council, the financing of peacekeeping operations, the question of rapid deployment and personnel and standby arrangements, cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, and the safety and security of United Nations personnel.

9. In particular, the Special Committee had concluded that, although there had been a decline in the number of United Nations personnel deployed on peacekeeping missions in the past year, it was still essential for the United Nations to be able to respond to threats to international peace and security; it had observed in that connection that lessons must be learned from recent experiences and efficiency must be enhanced with a view to the settlement of disputes by peaceful means and the prevention of conflicts. The principles and provisions of the Charter of the United Nations must be strictly observed in the

management and conduct of peacekeeping operations, and the operations should be provided with clear mandates and command structures, as well as secure financing.

10. The Committee had noted the development of new arrangements for consultations between troop contributors and the Security Council that had been announced by the President of the Security Council on 28 March 1996, and had encouraged the full utilization of that new procedure.

11. The Committee had encouraged the continuing efforts to improve the Organization's performance in the area of the planning, organization and effectiveness of peacekeeping operations, while calling attention to the imbalance between the number of posts financed by the United Nations and the number of military officers on loan to the Secretariat, and had urged the Secretary-General and the competent bodies of the General Assembly to provide for United Nations financing of posts currently occupied by officers on loan.

12. The Committee had expressed concern about the issue of ensuring the safety and security of United Nations personnel and had called upon Member States to ratify the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel so as to ensure its entry into force. It had also emphasized the important role of the United Nations in training peacekeeping personnel and had made a number of recommendations, including the further use of training assistance teams to assist Member States in training national instructors and developing peacekeeping training programmes.

13. In addition, the Committee had made several recommendations aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of United Nations civilian police in peacekeeping operations and had called upon the Secretariat to improve the system of standby arrangements for peacekeeping personnel. It had also requested the Secretariat to keep Member States informed with regard to the development and composition of a rapidly deployable headquarters team.

14. The Committee had noted that in the area of finances, further reforms were necessary to ensure that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had a predictable and stable financial base, and had urged the Secretary-General to ensure that troop-contributing countries were reimbursed in a timely fashion.

15. The Committee had recommended that its membership should be expanded so that those Member States which were past or current personnel contributors to United Nations peacekeeping operations and those which had been observers at the Committee's 1996 session could become members at its 1997 session. The Committee had further recommended that Member States which participated in its work for three consecutive years as observers should become members at its next session.

16. Mr. APUNTE (Ecuador) said that in the view of his delegation, peacekeeping operations were one of the basic areas of activity of the United Nations through which the principle of international cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security was put into practice. In recent years, Ecuador had provided a contingent for peacekeeping operations in Central America. His delegation supported the criteria set forth in the Special

Committee's report (A/51/130) that peacekeeping operations must be consistent with the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States, and non-intervention in matters that were within the domestic jurisdiction of any State. At the same time, additional elements which needed to be taken into account in carrying out such operations were the consent of the parties, impartiality, and the non-use of force except in self-defence.

17. on the issue of transparency, Ecuador supported the process of consultations with the Governments of troop-contributing countries. In that connection it endorsed the statement by the President of the Security Council of 4 November 1994 (S/PRST/1994/62) and felt that such consultations should be carried out routinely, as indicated in the letter dated 27 March 1996 from Chile addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1996/224).

18. As to the financing of operations, Ecuador agreed with the premise in the Special Committee's report that the economically more developed countries should make larger contributions to peacekeeping operations than the economically less developed countries. In addition, States must pay their contributions in full, on time and without any conditions.

19. Ecuador agreed that in order to enhance the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations and prevent escalation of conflicts, rapid deployment mechanisms needed to be established and the potential of the United Nations in the areas of early resolution and preventive deployment needed to be strengthened.

20. Ecuador was particularly interested in paragraph 32 of the report (A/51/130) which stressed the importance for maintaining peace and preventing the escalation of conflicts of the pacific settlement of disputes through negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements or other peaceful means chosen by the parties concerned. In that connection, close cooperation and interaction with regional organizations were important, since potential or actual conflicts could be settled more effectively through cooperation among neighbouring States.

21. Ecuador supported the proposal to expand the membership of the Special Committee at its next session.

22. Mr. ABDELLAH (Tunisia) said that in recent years there had been qualitative and quantitative changes in peacekeeping operations. The experience of conducting those operations had provided valuable lessons that deserved careful study. It was extremely important to observe the principles of territorial integrity and non-interference in States' internal affairs when planning United Nations missions. Experience showed that success could be achieved if the interested parties gave their consent and the tasks assigned were impartially implemented. In that connection, extreme circumspection must be shown when taking decisions on the use of force, which should be used only in exercise of the legitimate right of self-defence. As such action did not fall within the scope of Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations, it was perfectly clear that any actions involving the use of force to impose peace could be taken only on the basis of Chapter VII, and that that would require a new United Nations mandate and the allocation of adequate resources and means.

23. In cases where a peacekeeping mission was already under way, its duration or prolongation must be determined with reference to its specific objectives. Of course, certain factors, such as full cooperation on the part of the interested parties, were crucial to implementation of the operation, although it would be wrong to take a decision to curtail a mission because of budgetary considerations, thereby abandoning the population of the receiving State to the mercy of fate. It was regrettable that a shortage of funds should prevent the continuation of certain operations and have adverse effects on other aspects of peacekeeping activities, and, in particular, on reimbursement of the expenditures of countries contributing troops and technical support, which was particularly important in the case of the developing countries. It was also necessary to ensure observance of the fundamental principle of equitable geographical representation in recruitment of officials of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as the practice of using experts whose services were paid for by their Governments was becoming ever more widespread. Although that also made it possible to economize on resources, it was perfectly clear that only through timely and full payment of their contributions by all States could the Organization's financial problems be solved.

24. The establishment of standby forces was an important initiative that made it possible to improve planning and expedite the deployment of United Nations missions. It was also necessary to develop partnerships between States wishing to participate in those forces and States ready to provide them with the wherewithal to do so, in order to increase the number of participants in the standby arrangements. The idea of establishing a rapidly deployable headquarters team was a constructive contribution to enhancing the system of standby forces. Member States must be kept regularly informed at all stages of that initiative, and the principle of transparency must be observed throughout the process of elaboration and implementation of the proposal. Participants in the meeting of the Special Committee held on 24 October 1996 had stressed that member States must take a definitive decision on the establishment of that mechanism after studying it in all its aspects. It would appear that the main problem was one of financing.

25. Note should also be taken of the measures adopted by the Security Council on 28 March 1996 aimed at improving the process of consultation between troop-contributing States, the Security Council and the Secretariat. That was all the more important because responsiveness to the opinions and views of those countries was fundamental to successful implementation of United Nations operations. Thus, institutionalization of consultations with troop-contributing States, through the establishment of an organ of the Security Council on the basis of Article 29 of the Charter, would enable those consultations to be conducted regularly and periodically. In addition, provision could also be made for participation by troop-contributing States in the work of the Council through broader interpretation of Article 31 of the Charter, pursuant to which the Council could invite States to participate in its work whenever a question affecting them was being discussed.

26. Special consideration should be given to cooperation between the United Nations and regional peacekeeping agencies in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter. It was necessary to support the efforts of the African States, particularly in the framework of the mechanism of the Organization of African

Unity (OAU) for prevention and settlement of conflicts in Africa, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of cooperation between OAU and the United Nations. Tunisia welcomed the inclusions on its initiative, of two paragraphs in the Special Committee's report in which special attention was devoted to the need to improve arrangements for that cooperation. In that context, emphasis should be placed on the importance, in conflict prevention, not only of security issues but also of questions of socio-economic development. His delegation also welcomed the broadening of the composition of the Special Committee, as a result of which all interested States would be able to participate in its work.

27. Mr. CORVIN (Ireland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, and the associate countries of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia, and, in addition, Iceland, welcomed the approach adopted by the Bureau of the Special Committee in its preparation of the draft resolution dealing with the agenda item under consideration, and noted with satisfaction that the Special Committee had been able to reach consensus on a recommendation providing for the enlargement of the Committee.

28. The European Union's attachment to the peacekeeping activities of the United Nations was demonstrated by the fact that its member States provided over one third of the contributions for peacekeeping operations in terms of logistics, matériel and personnel. Financially, its contributions accounted for more than 37 per cent of the costs of United Nations peacekeeping operations. At the end of September 1996 troop-contributing States had been owed an amount estimated by the Secretariat at almost US$ 1.5 billion, virtually half of which was owed to member States of the European Union. That situation could not be prolonged indefinitely, and all Member States in arrears must therefore pay their contributions and ensure that in future they honoured all their financial obligations in full, promptly and without conditions.

29. Noting the valuable service performed by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations in putting forward recommendations and observations on how the practical and operational aspects of United Nations peacekeeping might be improved, the European Union wished to draw attention to some general considerations which would continue to underlie its approach to the work of the Special Committee on those matters. When considering, planning and implementing peacekeeping operations of all kinds, an integrated approach was necessary. The growing complexity of such multifunctional operations underlined the need for more effective coordination between the various components, as well as between the relevant United Nations departments and agencies. Furthermore, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations itself must draw on both current and past experiences to improve the planning, management, conduct and support of future operations.

30. The European Union strongly supported the development and strengthening of the system of standby arrangements and also welcomed the proposal of the Secretary-General to develop a rapidly deployable headquarters team based in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. It should also be recalled that several member States of the European Union had individually made proposals for developing the rapid-deployment capability within the framework of the United Nations system of standby arrangements. There was a need to bear in mind the broader framework in which United Nations peacekeeping operated. The role of

the United Nations in that regard could be usefully regarded as a continuum of many actions, ranging from the initial task of preventive diplomacy and peacemaking, through peacekeeping, to the challenges of post-conflict peace-building, reconciliation and reconstruction.

31. Regional arrangements and agencies, including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), could make an important contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security. In referring to the subject of cooperation among such organizations, the European Union would like to mention its close collaboration with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in working to strengthen the latter's conflict prevention mechanism. It had also expressed its support for the Secretary-General's proposals aimed at improving preparedness for conflict prevention and peacekeeping in Africa, including through widening the participation of African countries in standby planning, developing "partnership" arrangements and intensifying cooperation with OAU.

32. A primary consideration for all troop-contributing countries was the issue of safety and security of United Nations personnel. Public support for participation in United Nations operations could be reinforced if the security and safety of those who served under the United Nations flag was increased. The European Union also wished to emphasize the necessity for all personnel deployed in the field to be both trained and equipped in a manner that maximized their safety and security.

33. Mr. DHUNGANA (Nepal) said that an important development in the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations had been the agreement to increase its membership through the inclusion of former and current troop-contributing nations. The establishment of a standing oversight group of senior officials within the framework for coordination among the Secretariat departments directly concerned with the prevention, control and resolution of conflicts was an important step taken by the Secretary-General to strengthen United Nations capacity for early warning and preventive action. A sustained flow of objective and accurate information being vital to the analysis and assessment of any potential conflict situation, the inclusion of the Department of Public Information in that group could be considered.

34. It should be noted that, in connection with the steady development of the system of standby arrangements, Nepal had made a commitment to contribute up to 2,000 troops and 200 police personnel for peacekeeping at the request of the Secretary-General under the Security Council's mandate. In support of the concept of the rapidly deployable operational headquarters team, Nepal had offered the services of six military officers for various positions on the implementation team.

35. Despite the decline in their number over the past year, United Nations peacekeeping operations had remained the most important means of conflict management and maintenance of international peace and security. Nepal had been among the active participants in United Nations peacekeeping operations for a long time. Over 30,000 of its troops had served the United Nations at various times and over 1,000 of its police personnel had served with various peacekeeping missions. Nepal's commitment to United Nations peacekeeping continued undiminished. Many of its peacekeepers had laid down their lives in

the line of duty. As a real tribute, the United Nations should compensate all of its peacekeepers at the same rate.

36. Mr. HE Yafei (China) said that, along with the gradual improvements in peacekeeping mechanisms, some disturbing phenomena had also emerged. In order to continue to play a proper role in new situations, United Nations peacekeeping operations must follow the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as some basic principles proven to be effective in practice. Among the prerequisites for their success, peacekeeping operations should be mandated by the Security Council and implemented by the Secretary-General subject to the Council's political guidance.

37. Currently, the number and scale of United Nations peacekeeping operations had been remarkably reduced. However, their functions and scope had been expanded or altered. That made it necessary for the United Nations to cooperate with other bodies in a realistic manner. Because of the current instability in the world, the Security Council should authorize the establishment of each peacekeeping operation with care, taking into account the actual situation of the conflict, the attitude of the parties concerned and the actual capability of the United Nations. In the view of his delegation, preventive diplomacy and post-conflict peace-building, areas where the United Nations had been increasingly active in recent years, were different from peacekeeping operations both in nature and in content. The relevant United Nations bodies should not confuse peacekeeping operations with peace-building activities; still less should they force extraneous elements into peacekeeping operations under the pretext that the funding issue was difficult to resolve.

38. Another pressing problem for United Nations peacekeeping operations was caused by delayed payment of assessed contributions by a number of countries. It was thought-provoking that some countries, on the one hand, by their failure to pay their assessed contributions, reduced the available resources, forcing the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to cut its staff drastically, while on the other hand, assigning large numbers of officers on loan to the Department to improve its capacity, thus changing its composition in a manner unfavourable to developing countries and seriously undermining the provision of the Charter stipulating respect for the international character of the responsibilities of the Secretary-General and Secretariat staff. The mobilization of resources through voluntary contributions could also have a serious impact on the financial basis of the Organization, casting doubt on the fairness and representative nature of the United Nations.

39. In conclusion, his delegation emphasized that currently, most peacekeeping operations were taking place in developing countries. Therefore, it was all the more necessary for the United Nations to ensure more institutional participation by developing countries in the discussion, decision-making and implementation of peacekeeping operations, in order to prevent a small number of countries from dictating peacekeeping policies. His delegation welcomed the recommendation to expand the membership of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, and believed that its expansion would facilitate greater participation by developing countries in the comprehensive study and review of peacekeeping operations.

40. Ms. HERNES (Norway) said that, since the maintenance of international peace and security was one of the primary objectives of the United Nations, Norway had proposed the establishment of a fund for preventive action.

41. Currently, peacekeeping operations were rarely purely military undertakings; they also entailed large-scale humanitarian and civilian operations. There was a need for clearer and more effective links between the actual military operations and political activity, and for greater consistency between mandate, mission and the resources provided. In addition, there must be greater efforts to improve liaison, communication and coordination among all the actors in order to ensure that their efforts were mutually reinforcing.

42. Norway was pleased to note that improvements had been made in a number of areas of United Nations peacekeeping activities. One example was the increased information-sharing and enhanced coordination of activities among the various United Nations departments. Nevertheless, her delegation believed that additional measures should be taken to improve the Organization's efficiency in that area, and looked forward to further strengthening of the ability of the United Nations system to respond in a rapid and coordinated manner to conflict situations. Norway welcomed, in that connection, the decision to establish a rapidly deployable headquarters team within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. She was convinced that the unit would become an indispensable instrument for the implementation of carefully planned and coordinated measures in response to crisis situations. It was vital that there should be balanced geographical representation in the new unit. Norway therefore welcomed the proposal to establish a special trust fund for that purpose.

43. Norway was pleased to note the improvements made recently in a number of areas, such as the formulation of new regulations on reimbursement for contingent-owned equipment. There was a need to consider in the future whether some degree of authority for incurring expenses might not be delegated from Headquarters to the field level. It was also necessary to secure prompt start-up of operations in order to reduce the time which elapsed between the granting of mandates by the Security Council and the appropriation of funds. In addition, further attention must be given to the question of how the Department of Peacekeeping Operations could expedite the processing of claims for reimbursement by Member States, as well as the winding-up of operations and the liquidation of their accounts.

44. Norway had been and remained one of the major contributors to United Nations peacekeeping activities. Over the years, more than 50,000 people - over 1 per cent of Norway's population - had participated in peacekeeping operations. Currently, more than 700 Norwegian troops were serving under the United Nations flag. As a troop contributor, Norway welcomed the decision to widen the membership of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations.

45. Miss DURRANT (Jamaica), speaking on behalf of the member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that, as the Committee considered the question of United Nations peacekeeping operations, it must take careful stock of their missions and mandates. She welcomed, in that regard, the establishment of the Lessons Learned Unit and hoped that it would make a positive contribution to the enhancement of the efficiency of peacekeeping activities. There was a

need to formulate clear criteria to guide the implementation of peacekeeping operations. They must take into account the rules of engagement governing such operations and include clear goals and objectives. She welcomed, in that connection, the fact that the reports of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations emphasized the need for adequate public information with regard to peacekeeping operations. There could be no doubt that measures aimed at enhancing the ability of peacekeepers to disseminate information on their activities among the communities in which they operated would make a positive contribution to the success of missions.

46. The CARICOM member States fully endorsed the view that all peacekeeping operations should strictly observe the principles laid down in the Charter of the United Nations and that they should be conducted in accordance with the mandate given by the Security Council. They also supported the point made in the report of the Special Committee that adequate resources must be made available to each mission. In addition, it was important to stress the need to separate peacekeeping and peace-enforcement efforts. When the two became mixed, or the lines between them blurred, the chance of failure on both counts increased substantially.

47. The CARICOM member States were firmly convinced that the international community could not stand by impassively in the face of conflict situations. They therefore emphasized the need for a multifaceted approach to the issue of peacekeeping, peacemaking and conflict prevention. They supported the report's conclusion that efforts to foster the peaceful settlement of disputes through conciliation, mediation and other such measures, as well as recourse to regional organizations and other appropriate bodies, were important. They also believed that development programmes should be viewed as a valuable mechanism for addressing some of the problems which often led to tension and conflicts. When a community was able to satisfy the basic socio-economic needs of its population, a significant source of possible tension was eliminated. They wished therefore to reiterate the need for development to be considered as an important aspect of peacekeeping and peacemaking. They welcomed the close coordination between the Departments of Political Affairs, Humanitarian Affairs and Peacekeeping Operations in the comprehensive effort to deal with interrelated concerns in the peacekeeping area.

48. Recent events had demonstrated the need for the United Nations to develop the capacity to react rapidly to situations of heightened tension where such a response could serve to prevent hostilities and secure peace. In that connection, the CARICOM member States supported the efforts to establish a rapidly deployable headquarters team, which would enhance the capacity of the international community to respond quickly to situations in which conflicts could be averted through timely and appropriate action.

49. Her delegation believed that priority must be given to the prompt reimbursement of troop-contributing countries, and urged States to fulfil their obligation to contribute to the peacekeeping budget in a timely manner.

50. Mr. ÁLVAREZ (Uruguay) said that the issues under consideration were of paramount importance, and were basic to peacekeeping operations and the work of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Attention should be focused first

and foremost on the problem of delayed reimbursements to troop-contributing countries, which increased the burden on States contributing matériel, particularly developing countries. It could be concluded that the position of countries which did not pay their peacekeeping contributions was out of step with the efforts and sacrifices of those countries which contributed equipment for use by peacekeeping contingents. Efforts should be intensified to reach a timely and practical solution to the problem.

51. One of the most important issues being discussed at the present session was undoubtedly that of a rapidly deployable headquarters team in accordance with the recommendations submitted by the Secretariat at the previous session of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. His Government supported the concept of rapid deployment and believed that its useful role in averting conflicts and reducing deployment time was obvious and widely recognized.

52. It was noteworthy that consultations had taken place without the involvement of those countries which provided the bulk of the troops for peacekeeping operations in the various regions of the world. That was not the first time that countries which had put forward numerous peacekeeping initiatives had forgotten about the troop contributors, without which peacekeeping operations could not be conducted effectively. Uruguay, as a country which was making a significant contribution to such operations in regional terms, demanded the opportunity to participate in such consultations.

53. Another issue of concern to his delegation was the method of financing that had been used for the first eight posts in the initial stages of implementing the project. His delegation believed that those posts should be financed without recourse to so-called "loaned" officers. The correct course of action would be to finance such posts at the Organization's expense, but if such an option was impossible, they should be financed from voluntary contributions in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter regarding the need to comply with the principle of widest possible geographical representation. It seemed that a far simpler approach should be taken to resolving the financial problem. Peacekeeping activities were part of the most important task of the Organization, namely the maintenance of international peace and security. Bearing in mind that the urgent need to establish a rapid deployment force was universally recognized, it was surprising that an Organization in the midst of a restructuring which allowed it to reduce its staffing table by over 1,000 posts could not find a way to convert a mere eight posts in order to supplement and optimize the staffing table of the most important department in the Organization. Nor were any efforts being made to study the possibility of appointing officers currently working in the staffs of ongoing peacekeeping operations to the rapidly deployable headquarters team, at minimal cost to the United Nations.

54. Mr. JAYANAMA (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, said that the Movement recognized and supported the important role of peacekeeping operations in ensuring international peace and security, and was making a significant contribution to activities in that field. It must be emphasized that peacekeeping operations were ad hoc measures for preventing conflict situations from escalating while ways to resolve the conflict peacefully were being pursued. The use of force as a means for maintaining

peace and security should be utilized only as the last resort when all possible options had been exhausted.

55. In the decision-making process with regard to the establishment of peacekeeping operations, the following guiding principles had to be borne in mind. First, peacekeeping operations should strictly observe the principles and purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly with regard to the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States, and non-intervention in matters within the domestic jurisdiction of any State. Second, certain basic principles of peacekeeping were essential to its success, such as consent of the parties, impartiality, and the non-use of force except in self-defence. Third, peacekeeping operations should be conducted with clearly defined mandates, objectives, command structures and secure financing.

56. The Non-Aligned Movement believed that the membership of the Special Committee should be expanded, since it was the only United Nations forum that discussed in depth all aspects of peacekeeping operations. In that regard, the Movement welcomed the relevant draft resolution. With regard to the staffing of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, it should be noted that, despite the financial crisis and the crisis arising from non-payment of contributions, the Non-Aligned Movement wished to reiterate that the use of "loaned" or "gratis" officers was not the real solution for the difficulties the Department was facing. The Non-Aligned Movement was seriously concerned about the imbalance between personnel funded out of the Organization's regular budget and "loaned" or "gratis" personnel. It was alarming to note that some of the Department's important divisions were staffed wholly by loaned personnel. The Non-Aligned Movement was convinced that in the recruitment of the Department's personnel, the principle of equitable geographical representation should be fully taken into account in accordance with Articles 100 and 101 of the Charter.

57. In connection with the issue of financing peacekeeping operations, the Non-Aligned Movement believed that adequate financial resources and support were crucial to the effectiveness of the operations. Expenses for peacekeeping operations were to be borne by Member States in accordance with the existing special scale of assessment established by resolution 3101 (XXVIII) of 11 December 1973, which took account of the special responsibilities of the five permanent members of the Security Council and certain other economic considerations. The Non-Aligned Movement was therefore pleased to note that the Special Committee's report had mentioned that the economically more developed countries should make relatively larger contributions to peacekeeping operations. It was also important to bear in mind the special responsibility of the Security Council, as indicated in General Assembly resolution 1874 (S-IV) of 27 June 1963. At the same time, the Non-Aligned Movement noted with deep regret that certain developed countries were not paying their contributions. The Movement urged all Member States to pay their contributions in full, on time, and without conditions in order to enable the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the peacekeeping operations themselves to function efficiently.

58. With regard to the reimbursement of the costs of troop-contributing countries, it was regrettable that the Organization's current indebtedness to the 71 countries contributing troops and equipment for 16 peacekeeping

operations amounted to about $1.44 billion. Almost $400 million of that amount was owed to developing countries. The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries also noted with regret the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services covering activities for the period from July 1995 to June 1996 (A/51/432), which stated that in the past year millions of dollars had been lost as a result of waste, fraud and malfeasance in 16 peacekeeping operations. The officers responsible for those malpractices should be identified and disciplinary measures taken against them.

59. However, there were some positive developments with respect to death and disability compensation. The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries believed that a uniform scale for such compensation should be established in the United Nations. It was pleased to learn that efforts were already being made in that respect and hoped that the new scale would be introduced in the near future.

60. With regard to rapid deployment and standby arrangements, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries recognized the need to improve the ability of the United Nations to deploy peacekeeping operations expeditiously and it supported the establishment and development of the standby system. At present DPKO was working on another measure designed to improve that ability, namely the rapidly deployable mission headquarters (RDMHQ). In connection with the findings of the special session of the Special Committee, the Non-Aligned Movement had to agree that some doubts remained on such issues as staffing, functions and financing of the proposed unit. The many questions which had been raised in that regard at the special session must be carefully examined in order to determine the most appropriate ways and means of financing and staffing the unit.

61. The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries had always attached great importance to consultations between the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries. It believed that all decisions of the Security Council on all aspects of peacekeeping operations must be arrived at in a transparent manner. In that regard it welcomed the statement of the President of the Security Council of 28 March 1996 concerning meetings of troop-contributing countries. It was to be hoped that that first step would actually lead to improvement and institutionalization of the consultation mechanism, which in turn could help to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of peacekeeping operations.

62. Mr. ZAKI (Egypt) said that for many years Egypt had been conscientiously fulfilling its commitments, for it understood the noble task of the United Nations in the maintenance of peace. As the country providing the Rapporteur of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, Egypt wished to make a number of comments on current peacekeeping operations. Serious efforts must be made in the area of preventive diplomacy, and if conflicts did break out the United Nations, and especially the Security Council, must swiftly establish peacekeeping operations with clearly defined mandates. The enhancement of the effectiveness of the United Nations and of its capacity to take action swiftly in a crisis was one of the most important matters requiring attention. The Egyptian delegation endorsed the initiatives to increase the Organization's operational effectiveness and believed that the decisions should be taken on the basis of consensus and in a transparent manner. In connection with the funding of posts in DPKO it referred to General Assembly resolution 48/226, which

requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the question and intimated that the existing practice must not be continued. His delegation was particularly worried about the information provided in the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, which noted a number of malpractices in peacekeeping operations. It called for an investigation to identify the persons responsible for those malpractices. It also expressed the hope that the consultations between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries would be continued and lead to cooperation between them at a qualitatively new level. As one of the founder members of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, Egypt supported its recommendations for expansion of the Committee's membership and expressed the hope that such a move would lead to improvements in the financing of peacekeeping operations. It commended the efforts of the United Nations to improve its cooperation with regional organizations in peacekeeping operations and would endeavour to support those efforts by encouraging cooperation between the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

63. Mr. CHOWDHURY (Bangladesh) said that despite a significant scaling-down of personnel in existing United Nations peacekeeping operations the peacekeepers continued to carry out multidimensional activities and were still confronted by difficulties of every kind.

64. Bangladesh strongly supported the recommendations contained in the draft resolution on the transformation of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations into an open-ended body and expressed its wish to participate in the work of the expanded Committee. The most important needs in a peacekeeping mission were clearly defined mandates and rules of engagement, and knowledge of situations on the ground. In that regard the United Nations should establish an early-warning mechanism so that conflicts could be nipped in the bud. His delegation agreed with other delegations on the need for clear-cut political direction and a unified command and control structure for each operation, with an indication of the specific responsibilities and authority of each commanding officer.

65. His delegation commended the efforts to consolidate the standby arrangements, but it was difficult for Bangladesh, as for other small countries with resource constraints, to provide equipment for use in different terrains and locations. In that connection it urged States which were unable to provide troops at least to provide equipment in order to facilitate the speedy deployment of peacekeeping operations.

66. His delegation supported the concept of a rapidly deployable headquarters team and considered that the widest spectrum of countries should be represented in it. With the establishment of the proposed trust fund, such wide participation would become a reality, and Bangladesh wished to have an opportunity to contribute military personnel to such a team.

67. His delegation was deeply concerned at the prevalent practice of "loan officers" in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, since there was a wide disparity in the number of personnel from the developed and developing countries. The United Nations must conduct a review and study of that system and make recruitment of personnel, both at Department headquarters and in the

field, on the basis of the procedure set forth in Articles 100 and 101 of the Charter of the United Nations.

68. Bangladesh shared the concern of other delegations at the reluctance of some countries to contribute to the financing of peacekeeping operations, since that had an adverse impact on the reimbursement of troop-contributing countries, particularly those from developing countries and, even more, from such least developed countries as Bangladesh. All Member States, particularly the developed States, which were in a position to do so, should pay their contributions in full and on time and, most importantly, without conditions and in accordance with their existing scales of assessment. In that respect, his delegation wished to emphasize that peacekeeping resources should not be at the expense of resources for United Nations development activities.

69. An important issue of concern to his delegation was the practice of applying unjust formulas to determine the amount of compensation to be paid in the case of death or disability, which resulted in different levels of compensation depending on the country of origin. That was especially discouraging when practised in the United Nations where, according to the Charter, all Member States were equal. That anomaly must be removed and a uniform scale of compensation for death and disability must be applied irrespective of the country of origin of those receiving compensation.

70. His delegation stressed its commitment to peacekeeping, which was a vital aspect of United Nations activities. Bangladesh was proud of the fact that it continued to be one of the largest troop contributors. In conclusion, his delegation wished to pay special tribute to all the men and women who, as United Nations peacekeepers, had sacrificed their lives for the sake of peace.

71. Mr. OTHMAN (Joint Inspection Unit), introducing the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), entitled "Military component of United Nations peacekeeping operations" (A/50/576), said that, in the report, JIU had considered a number of relevant issues and advanced recommendations under three general topics: (a) the managerial aspects of mandates for peacekeeping; (b) the availability of troops and equipment; and (c) the capacity of the United Nations Secretariat to cope with the tasks entrusted to it.

72. Under the first topic, JIU discussed the roles of the members of the Security Council, troop-contributing countries and the United Nations Secretariat. The Unit recommended the participation of troop-contributing countries in the consultations prior and subsequent to the development of a peacekeeping mandate and the formation of an operative plan for implementing that mandate. With regard to the second topic, JIU pointed to two major problems: the readiness of troops to participate actively in peacekeeping operations and the timely deployment of troops. It discussed some of the ongoing efforts to improve the effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping operations. Under the third topic in the report, JIU dealt with the functioning and restructuring of different departments, in particular the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

73. Two of the specific recommendations made by JIU called upon the Secretary-General to ensure that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations built up

skilled personnel, both military and civilian, amongst whom a rapidly deployable temporary headquarters team could be dispatched to the field, and to carry out the full integration of the Field Administration and Logistics Division within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

74. Mr. KRASULIN (Joint Inspection Unit), introducing the JIU report entitled "Sharing responsibilities in peacekeeping: the United Nations and regional organizations" (A/50/571), said that the main reason for preparing the report had been the fact that the number of the United Nations peacekeeping operations had increased dramatically in recent years and, as a result, the Organization's capacity to carry out peacekeeping activities had been overextended. There was a need to share responsibilities for collective security with other organizations.

75. The report put forward the findings and recommendations of a JIU study on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining peace and security. Its objective was to contribute to the current efforts to increase the involvement of regional operations in collective security in the hope that that would ease the burden on the United Nations.

76. The main conclusions and recommendations in that regard were: to prepare and submit to the General Assembly for consideration a comprehensive strategic programme of cooperation with regional organizations in peacekeeping and other peace-related activities, for the development of which it was necessary to establish a project team composed of representatives of all departments concerned; to conclude bilateral framework agreements between United Nations and regional organizations concerning practical aspects of peacekeeping and other peace-related activities; and to create a mechanism for cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations.

77. The General Assembly might wish to encourage Member States and regional organizations to place their facilities and human resources for standardized training at the disposal of the United Nations, other regional organizations and Member States. The Joint Inspection Unit had recommended that consideration should be given to the possibility of establishing different funds on the basis of voluntary contributions for peacekeeping activities of regional organizations.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.